

CHAPTER 4

II. VARIATION IN ACTIVITIES TO PREVENT WEST NILE VIRUS BY SIZE OF POPULATION SERVED - 2004

Local public health agencies that serve larger population sizes are reportedly using a wider variety of methods to provide outreach and education aimed at prevention of WNV. Larger agencies, as well as other governmental units in larger population areas, are more likely to be performing activities to reduce mosquito-breeding habitat, and to reduce the number of adult mosquitoes than agencies or other governmental units in areas that are more sparsely populated. More surveillance activities are done by large agencies than by smaller ones, and large agencies are more likely to develop annual plans to address the threat of WNV.

Public Education: Nearly all agencies conduct public outreach activities to promote mosquito bite prevention, but agencies that serve larger sizes of population are more likely to specifically target their outreach to adults over 50. Eighty-one percent (81%) of agencies that serve populations between 40,001 and 80,000, and 85% of agencies that serve populations over 80,000 target the older segment of their population. Only 60% to 72% of agencies in the 2 groups that serve populations 40,000 or fewer target their outreach activities. (See Graphs 8.1 thru 8.3.1 & 8.3.2 and Data Tables 8.3.1 & 8.3.2)

The methods used for public outreach differ according to size of population served by the agency. Eighty-one percent (81%) of agencies that serve populations between 40,001 and 80,000, and 92% of agencies that serve populations over 80,000 provide media interviews as a means to educate on WNV prevention, while only 38% of agencies that serve populations fewer than 20,000 use this method. Ninety-two percent (92%) of agencies that serve populations over 80,000 provide prevention information through their website; only 24% to 41% of agencies in groups that serve other sizes of population utilize a website for this purpose. All agencies that serve populations over 80,000 do community presentations to outreach with prevention education, while only 38% of the smallest agencies reportedly provide presentations. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of agencies that serve populations between 40,001 and 80,000 and 66% of those that serve populations between 20,001 and 40,000 provide community presentations on WNV prevention. (See Graph 8.4 and Data Table 8.4)

Surveillance: Most agencies, regardless of size of the population they serve, submit dead birds to be tested for WNV, however, agencies that serve populations greater than 80,000 are more likely to also submit adult mosquitoes and larvae for testing. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the largest agencies submit adult mosquitoes and larvae, while only 7% of the smallest agencies do so. Agencies that serve populations greater than 80,000 are more likely to plot results of testing on a map; 77% of the largest agencies utilize a method to demonstrate test results geographically while only 14% of the smallest agencies do so. (See Graphs 8.5.1, 8.5.2 & 8.5.5 and Data Tables 8.5.1, 8.5.2 & 8.5.5)

Response to Public: 92% of agencies that serve populations over 80,000 reportedly respond to citizen complaints of large number of mosquitoes; 45% to 66% of agencies in groups that serve other sizes of population report doing this. Agencies that serve populations over 80,000 are also more likely to assess mosquito-breeding habitat; 77% do so compared to only 14% to 34% of agencies in the 3 groups serving smaller populations. Fifty-four percent (54%) of agencies that serve populations over 80,000 enforce ordinances that address mosquito habitat, but on 4% to 13% of agencies in groups that serve other population sizes do enforcement. Other city and/or county governmental units in large population areas are also more likely than those in smaller population areas to have ordinances to eliminate mosquito-breeding habitat and to enforce them. (See Graphs 8.1 thru 8.3.1, 8.5.3, 8.5.4 & 8.6.3 and Data Tables 8.1, 8.5.3, 8.5.4 & 8.6.3)

Larvaciding to prevent development of mosquito larvae is done by 85% of agencies that serve populations over 80,000; 9% to 25% of agencies in groups that serve other sizes of population report doing this. Forty-six percent (46%) of agencies that serve populations over 80,000 spray chemicals intending to kill adult mosquitoes, while only 3% to 6% of agencies in the groups that serve smaller populations do so. Other city and county governmental units in areas with larger population are also more likely to conduct larvaciding and chemical spraying than governmental units in smaller population areas. (See Graphs 8.5.6, 8.5.7, 8.6.1 & 8.6.2 and Data Tables 8.5.6, & 8.5.7, 8.6.1 & 8.6.2)

Planning Prevention and Control: 85% of agencies that serve populations over 80,000 do planning annually to respond to WNV threats compared to less than half (48%) of agencies that serve populations fewer than 20,000. Ninety-two percent of the largest agencies involve other agencies in their planning process compared to only 34% of the smallest agencies. (See Graphs 8.5.8 & 8.5.9 and Data Tables 8.5.8 & 8.5.9)

Public Health Policy: only 5% of agencies that serve populations fewer than 20,000 feel that the public would support, without reservations, public policy that addresses mosquito-breeding habitat. Only 16% of these agencies feel their public would accept non-enforceable mediation activities to reduce mosquito habitat. However, at least half (50%) are unsure of the degree of acceptance of either of these public policy strategies. Conversely, 54% of the largest agencies feel there would be no reservation regarding acceptance of nuisance ordinances intended to reduce mosquito numbers. (See Graphs 8.7.1 & 8.7.1 and Data Tables 8.7.1 & 8.7.2)